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Practice in the courts of Accomac and Northampton counties.

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BETTER THAN CRYSTAL.
DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON ABOUT RELIGIOUS EXCELLENCE.
The Natural Crystal is the Star of the Mountain and the Queen of the Cave, but the Crystal of Religion Excels Everything.

NEW YORK, April 19.—The eagerness to hear Dr. Talmage's sermons at the Christian Herald services on Sunday evenings in this city, continues unabated. As usual there was this evening a dense mass of people waiting outside the Academy of Music long before the hour for commencement, and every seat in the huge building was occupied in a few minutes after the doors were opened. Dr. Talmage had preached to an immense audience in the morning in the Brooklyn Academy of Music. His text was, "The crystal cannot equal it" (Job xxviii. 7).

Many of the precious stones of the Bible have come to prompt recognition. But for the present I take up the less valuable crystal. Job, in my text, compares saving wisdom with a specimen of topaz. An infidel chemist or mineralogist would pronounce the latter worth more than the former, but Job makes an intelligent comparison, looks at religion and then looks at the crystal, and pronounces the former as of far superior value to the latter, exclaiming in the words of my text, "The crystal cannot equal it."

THE EXCELLENCE OF RELIGION.
Now, it is not a part of my sermon design to depreciate the crystal, whether it be found in Cornish mine or Hartz mountain or Mammoth cave or tinkling among the pendants of the chandeliers of a palace. The crystal is the star of the mountain; it is the queen of the cave; it is the carol of the hills; it finds its heaven in the diamond. Among all the pages of natural history there is no page more interesting to me than the page crystallography. But I want to show you that Job was right when, taking religion in one hand and the crystal in the other, he declared that the former is of far more value and beauty than the latter, recommending it to all the people and to all the ages, declaring, "The crystal cannot equal it."

In the first place, I remark that religion is superior to the crystal in exactness. That shapeless mass of crystal against which you accidentally dashed your foot is laid out with more exactness than any earthly city. There are six styles of crystallization, and all of them divinely ordained. Every crystal has mathematical precision. God's geometry reaches through it, and it is a square, or it is a rectangle, or it is a rhomboid, or in some way it hath a mathematical figure. Now, religion beats that in the simple fact that spiritual accuracy is more beautiful than material accuracy.

God's attributes are exact. God's law exact. God's decrees exact. God's management of the world exact. Never counting wrong, though he counts the grass blades, and the stars, and the sands and the eyelids. His providences never dealing with us perpendicularly when those providences ought to be oblique, nor lateral when they ought to be vertical. Everything in our life arranged without any possibility of mistake. Each life a sided prism. Born at the right time, dying at the right time. There are no "happy accidents" in our theology. If I thought this was a slipshod universe I would go crazy. God is not an anarchist. Law, order, symmetry, precision, a perfect square, a perfect rectangle, a perfect rhomboid, a perfect circle. The edge of God's robe of government never frays out. There are no loose screws in the world's machinery.

It did not just happen that Napoleon was attacked with indigestion at Borodino so that he became incompetent for the day. It did not just happen that John Thomas, the missionary, on a heathen island, waiting for an outfit and orders for another missionary tour, received that outfit and those orders in a box that floated ashore, while the ship and the crew that carried the box never were heard of. The barking of F. W. Robertson's dog, he tells us, led to a line of events which brought him from the army into the Christian ministry, where he served God with world renowned usefulness. It did not merely happen so. I believe in a particular providence. I believe God's geometry may be seen in all our life more beautifully than in crystallography. Job was right. "The crystal cannot equal it."

THE TRANSPARENCY OF RELIGION.
Again I remark that religion is superior to the crystal in transparency. We know not when or by whom glass was first discovered. Beads of it have been found in the tomb of Alexander Severus. Vases of it are brought up from the ruins of Herculaneum. There were female adulterers made out of it three thousand years ago—those adulterers found now attached to the mummies of Egypt. A great many commentators believe that my text means glass. What would we do without the crystal? The crystal in the window to keep out the storm and let in the day: the crystal over the watch defending its delicate machinery, yet allowing us to see the hour: the crystal of the telescope by which the astronomer brings distant worlds so near he can inspect them. Oh, the triumphs of the crystals in the celebrated windows of Rome and Salisbury!

But there is nothing so transparent in a crystal as in our holy religion. It is a transparent religion. You put it to your eye, and you see man—his sin, his soul, his destiny. You look at God and you see something of the grandeur of his character. It is a transparent religion. Infidels tell us it is opaque! Do you know why they tell us it is opaque? It is because they are blind. The natural man receiveth not the things of God because they are spiritually discerned. There is no trouble with the crystal; the trouble is with the eyes which try to look through it. We pray for vision. Lord, that our eyes might be opened. When the

eye saves cures our blindness then we find that religion is transparent.

It is a transparent Bible. All the mountains of the Bible come out—Sinai, the mountain of the law; Pisgah, the mountain of prospect; Olivet, the mountain of instruction; Calvary, the mountain of sacrifice. All the rivers of the Bible come out—Hiddekel, or the river of paradise; Jordan, or the river of holy ephraim; Cherith, or the river of prophetic supply; Nile, or the river of palaces; and the pure river of life from under the throne, clear as crystal. While reading this Bible after our eyes have been touched by grace we find it all transparent, and the earth rocks, now with crucifixion agony and now with judgment terror, and Christ appears in some of his two hundred and fifty-six titles, as far as I can count them—the bread, the rock, the captain, the commander, the conqueror, the star, and on and beyond any capacity of mine to rehearse them. Transparent religion!

THE BEAUTY OF RELIGION.
The providence that seemed dark before becomes pellucid. Now you find God is not trying to put you down. Now you understand why you lost that child and why you lost your property; it was to prepare you for eternal treasures. And why sickness came, it being the precursor of immortal joyance. And now you understand why they lied about you and tried to drive you hither and thither. It was to put you in the glorious company of such men as Ignatius, who when he went out to be destroyed by the lions said, "I am the wheat, and the teeth of the wild beasts must first grind me before I can become pure bread for Jesus Christ." The company of such men as Polycarp, who when standing in the midst of the amphitheater waiting for the lions to come out of their cave and destroy him, and the people in the galleries jeering and shouting, "The lions for Polycarp," replied, "Let them come on," and then stooping down toward the cave where the wild beasts were roaring to get out, "Let them come on." Ah, yes, it is persecution to put you in glorious company; and while there are many things that you will have to postpone to the future world for explanation, I tell you that it is the whole tendency of your religion to unravel and explain and interpret and illumine and irradiate. Job was right. It is glorious transparency. "The crystal cannot equal it."

I remark again that religion surpasses the crystal in its beauty. That lump of crystal is put under the magnifying glass of the crystallographer, and he sees in it indescribable beauty—snow-driplets and splinters of hoar frost and corals and wreaths and stars and crowns and castellations of conspicuous beauty. The fact is that crystal is so beautiful that I can think of but one thing in all the universe that is so beautiful, and that is the religion of the Bible. No wonder this Bible represents that religion as the daybreak, as the apple blossoms of the glister of a king's banquet. It is the joy of this whole earth.

TALK MORE OF THE CROWN.
People talk too much about their cross and not enough about their crown. Do you know the Bible mentions a cross but twenty-seven times, while it mentions a crown eighty times? Ask that old man what he thinks of religion. He has been a close observer. He has been culturing an aesthetic taste. He has seen the sunrises of a half century. He has been an admirer of canons and corals and all kinds of beautiful things. Ask him what he thinks of religion, and he will tell you, "It is the most beautiful thing I ever saw." "The crystal cannot equal it."

Beautiful in its symmetry. When it presents God's character it does not present Him as having love like a great protuberance on one side of his nature, but makes that love in harmony with his justice—a love that will accept all those who come to Him, and a justice that will by no means clear the guilty. Beautiful religion in the sentiment it implants! Beautiful religion in the hope it kindles! Beautiful religion in the fact that it proposes to garland and enshrine and enuphrate an immortal spirit. Solomon says it is a lily. Paul says it is a crown. The Apocalypse says it is a fountain kissed of the sun. Ezekiel says it is a foliaged cedar. Christ says it is a bridegroom come to fetch home a bride. While Job in the text takes up a whole vase of precious stones—the topaz and the sapphire and the chrysothemum, and he takes out of this beautiful vase just one crystal, and holds it up until it gleams in the warm light of the eastern sky, and he exclaims, "The crystal cannot equal it."

Oh, it is not a stale religion, it is not a stupid religion, it is not a toothless hag, as some seem to have represented it; it is not a Meg Merrilies, with shriveled arm, come to scare the world. It is the fairest daughter of God, heirress of all his wealth. Her cheek the morning sky; her voice the music of the south wind; her step the dance of the sea. Come and woo her. The spirit and the bride say come, and whosoever will, let him come. Do you agree with Solomon and say it is a lily? Then pluck it and wear it over your heart. Do you agree with Paul and say it is a crown? Then let this hour be your coronation. Do you agree with the Apocalypse and say it is a springing fountain? Then come and shake the thirst of your soul. Do you believe with Ezekiel and say it is a foliaged cedar? Then come under its shadow. Do you believe with Christ and say it is a bridegroom come to fetch home a bride? Then strike hands with your Lord the King while I pronounce you everlastingly one. Or if you think with Job that it is a jewel, then put it on your hand like a ring, on your neck like a bead, on your forehead like a star, while looking into the mirror of God's word you acknowledge "the crystal cannot equal it."

RELIGION'S TRANSFORMATION.
Again, religion is superior to the crystal in its transformations. The diamond is only a crystallization of

carbon. Carbonate of lime rises till it becomes calcite of aragonite. Red oxide of copper crystallizes into cubes and octahedrons. Those crystals which adorn our persons, and our homes, and our museums have only been resurrected from forms that were far from lustrous. Scientists for ages have been examining these wonderful transformations. But I tell you in the gospel of the Son of God there is a more wonderful transformation. Oversouls, by reason of sin black as coal and hard as iron, God by his comforting grace stoops and says, "They shall be mine in the day when I make up my jewels." "What," say you, "will God wear jewels?" If he wanted it he could make the stars of heaven his belt and have the evening clouds for the sandals of his feet, but he does not want that adornment. He will not have that jewelry. When God wants jewelry he comes down and digs it out of the depths and darkness of sin. These souls are all crystallizations of mercy. He puts them on and he wears them in the presence of the whole universe. He wears them on the hand that was nailed, over the heart that was pierced, on the temples that were stung. "They shall be mine," saith the Lord, "in the day when I make up my jewels." Wonderful transformation! "The crystal cannot equal it." There she is, a waif of the street; but she shall be a sister of charity. There he is, a sot in the delf; but he shall preach the gospel. There, behind the bars of a prison, but he shall reign with Christ forever. Where sin abounded grace shall much more abound. The carbon becomes the solitaire. "The crystal cannot equal it."

Now, I have no liking for those people who are always enlarging in Christian meetings about their early dissipation. Do not go into the particulars, my brothers. Simply say you were sick, but make no display of your ulcers. The chief stock in trade of some ministers and Christian workers seems to be their early crimes and dissipation. The number of pockets who, picked and the number of chickens, you stole make very poor prayer meeting rhetoric. Besides that, it discourages other Christian people who never got drunk or stole anything. But it is pleasant to know that those who were farthest down have been brought highest up. Out of infernal sorrow into eternal brightness. Out of darkness into light. From coal to the solitaire. "The crystal cannot equal it."

THE JEWELS OF REFRIGERY.
But, my friends, the chief transforming power of the Gospel will not be seen in this world, and not until heaven breaks upon the soul. When that light falls upon the soul then you will see the crystals. Oh, what a magnificent setting for these jewels of eternity! I sometimes hear people representing heaven in a way that is far from attractive to me. It seems almost a vulgar heaven as they represent it, with great blotches of color and bands of jasper and agate and emerald and sapphire and heaven as exquisitely beautiful. Three crystals. In one place he says, "Her light was like a precious stone, clear as crystal." In another place he says, "I saw a pure river from under the throne, clear as crystal." In another place he says, "Before the throne there was a sea of glass clear as crystal." Three crystals! John says crystal atmosphere. That means health. Balm of eternal June. What weather after the world's east wind! No rack of storm clouds. One breath of that air will cure the worst tubercle. Crystal light on all the leaves. Crystal light shimmering on the topaz of the temples. Crystal light tossing in the plumes of the equestrians of heaven on white horses. But "the crystal cannot equal it." John says crystal river. That means joy. Deep and ever rolling. Not one drop of the Thames or the Hudson or the Rhine to soil it. Not one tear of human sorrow to inhibit it. Crystal, the rain out of which it was made. Crystal, the bed over which it shall roll and ripple. Crystal, its infinite surface. But "the crystal cannot equal it." John says crystal sea. That means multitudinously vast. Vast in nature. Rapture vast as the sea, deep as the sea, strong as the sea, ever changing as the sea. Billows of light. Billows of beauty, blue with skies that were never clouded, and green with depths that were never fathomed. Arctic and Antarctic and Mediterranean and Atlantic and Pacific in crystalline magnificence. Three crystals. Crystal light falling on a crystal river. Crystal river rolling into a crystal sea. But "the crystal cannot equal it."

"Oh," says some one, putting his hand over his eyes, "can it be that I who have been in so much sin and in trouble will ever come to these crystals? Yes, it may be—it will be. Heaven we must have, whatever we have or have not, and we come here to get it. "How much must I pay for it?" you say. You will pay for it just as much as the coal pays to become the diamond. In other words, nothing. The same Almighty power that makes the crystal in the mountain will make your heart, which is harder than stone, for the promise is, "I will take away your stony heart and I will give you a heart of flesh."

STOP EATING THE DOOR.
"Oh," says some one, "it is just the doctrine I want; God is to do everything and I am to do nothing." My brother, it is not the doctrine you want. The coal makes no resistance. It hears the resurrection voice in the mountain and it comes to crystallization; but your heart resists. The trouble with you, my brother, is the coal wants to stay coal. I do not ask you to throw open the door and let Christ in. I only ask that you stop bolting it and barring it. Oh, my friends, we will have to get rid of our sins. I will have to get rid of my sins and you will have to get rid of your sins.

What will we do with our sins among the three crystals? The crystal atmosphere would display our pollution. The crystal river would be befouled with our touch. The crystal sea would whelm us with its glittering surge.

A Cheering Word for the Husband.
One of these days things may work round again to an appreciation of the Present Man as distinguished from the Coming Woman, who makes so large a figure in literature. Take him all in all the helpful husband is about the finest character of the day. There has been a certain exaltation for the woman in stepping outside her home, but for the man, what patience, what subduing of pride, what building up of new ideals! For once the character of the sexes seem to be reversed; the bravery of adventure is the woman's, the watching for results the man's.

Where can one find a finer development of chivalry than in men, and they are not few in number, who, against their desires, against their instincts, against their reason, are letting their wives support themselves in marriage, are even urging them and aiding them to walk in directions which it pains them to see them walk, because they are farsighted enough or loving and loyal enough to leave even the woman who is dearest to them to work out her own salvation? I am a man who does this knows that he is misunderstood, knows that he is criticised, and his part—the silent part—is quite as plucky as many of the most applauded displays of feminine energy and enterprise.—New York Recorder.

Let Against Fox.
One early morning, during a snow-storm, I was starting for the hills. I noticed the footprints of a cat upon the fresh snow. I guessed the cat was my own, a strong, black tom. Curious to know how far his prolegations might have extended, I made up my mind to find out, if possible. I did not, however, follow the track more than a few hundred yards when I came upon what appeared to have been a desperate struggle, and which at first sight I took to be the marks of puss and an unfortunate hare or rabbit, but upon closer examination I found the antagonist must have been a fox.

The combat, as long as it lasted, must have been a severe one, as it was quite clear from the marks on the snow that one or both of the animals were down several times. I am inclined to believe that Reynard came off second best in the affray, as it could be seen that he retreated back the way he came, whereas puss continued on his wanderings until he entered a thick plantation, where I had to give up pursuit. When I got home I found the cat had got home before me, and was apparently none the worse for his morning's adventure.—Land and Water.

Liked Going Out.
"What part of the service did you like best?" queried Mrs. Reredos after church.

"The recessional," returned Mr. R.—Pack.

The Heart Due to Vanity.
The line of the heart rises at the outer edge of the palm, and commonly about an inch below the root of the little finger. It usually extends in a direction nearly parallel to the upper edge of the palm, but frequently slopes upward or downward. Sometimes it is made up of capricious, jerky zig-zags. It may terminate under any of the four fingers, or it may run into the line of the head. If the line is plain, single, red and continuous, it promises strong and wholesome domestic affection. But if, as we expect to find in the feminine hand, it is broad, pale and spotted, and ornamented with little trimmings and deviations, it indicates caprice and flirtatious adventure.

If the line is made up of jerks it indicates extreme inconstancy as well as vanity and flabby emotion. If the line is broken under the little finger it indicates a misfortune in love arising (the misfortune) from the subject's fondness for gypsy; if broken under the third finger, a love misfortune arising from fondness for art or music or literature; under the second finger, from devotion to religion; under the first, from pride and ambition.—D. D. Bidwell in New York Ledger.

Legal Bulls.
Lord Kenyon stands at the head of the legal fraternity of bulls. He once addressed a prisoner at the bar who had been convicted of stealing wine from his master's cellar in a very bombastic style, likening his crime to the most atrocious man can commit, and concluded by saying that for many years he had been "feathering his nest with his master's bottles."

Coleridge, in referring to Lord Kenyon's incredible ignorance, tells us that in his address to the jury in a trial for blasphemy, he said, "Above all, gentlemen, need I name you the Emperor Julian, who was so celebrated for the practice of every Christian virtue that he was called Julian the Apostle."—Providence Journal.